Using Restorative Justice Practices to Support Students with Intensive Behavioral Needs

Session 6A

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Travis Hall, Renton Academy

• **Topic:** Restorative Justice Practices
• **Keywords:** Restorative Justice, Alternative Settings, Equity
Learning Objectives

1. Learn about the use restorative practices in alternative settings

2. Understand how one school has put these practices in place

3. Learn about relevant resources to guide implementation in your school or district
Acknowledgments for Contributions

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- Ted Wachtel
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- Renton Academy
- Oakland School District
- International Institute of Restorative Practices
Honoring Indigenous Roots

• Restorative Practices have many indigenous and first nations roots that should be recognized and honored.

• The model that has evolved in schools closely models the Ojibwe people’s model known as Biidaaban. Bii means the future, daa means the present and ban means the past.

• The goal of Biidaaban is for people who have harmed to take responsibility for the harm they have caused, be accountable to the community and to people they have hurt, publicly apologize and make amends and restitution.
Connection Before Content
Would you rather…. 

How are you arriving today on a scale of 1-5? 1 being low and 5 being high?

- Would you rather face a zombie apocalypse or an alien invasion?
- Be on a survival reality show or dating game show?
Restorative Practices Defined

Restorative practices cultivate a culture in which everyone feels like they *belong*. They build a particular *sense of community* in which every member—students, staff, parents, and community members, feel that they are *seen, heard, and valued*. 
People are worthy and relational

People who feel worthy have a strong sense of belonging

The Little Book of Restorative Justice in Education
Katherine Evans and Dorothy Vaandering

National PBIS Leadership Forum
Three Central Components of Restorative Practices

• Restorative is not what we do, but how we are in relation to one another. The circle can be a central part of this.

• We have to do **WITH** versus To or For

• We need to gain voice and input in decision making
Characteristics of Restorative Schools

- Educators are models of restorative practice
- Physical environment promotes an ethos of care
- Emotional environment promotes an ethos of care
- School policies and practices focus on restoration
  - Conflict resolution
  - Flexible policies including differentiated discipline

Jeff Sprague
**RESTORATIVE PRACTICES: Social Discipline**

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<td>Consistent Accountable</td>
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<td>Confrontation</td>
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**Window**

- **High**
  - Control (limit setting, discipline)
  - Support: Encouragement, nurture

- **Low**
  - National PBIS Leadership Forum

*The Restorative Practices Handbook* by Bob Costello, Joshua Wachtel and Ted Wachtel
Students

• Negative school experiences
• Rarely feel successful
• Low levels of self-esteem
• Negative thinking patterns
• Targets of bullying and harassment

Staff Members

• Demands: preparation, time, effort
• Minimal breaks throughout the day
• High burn out/turnover rates
• Trained in de-escalation techniques, rarely preventative strategies

Schools

• Inconsistency in language/procedures
• Differing perspectives
• Use of seclusion/restraints/punishments

(Downs & Arzamarski, 2016; Scott & Cooper, 2013)
The Three-Tiered Model Exists Even in Specialized Settings:

What Differs is the Frequency and Intensity of the Supports
Renton Academy

Restorative Practices in an Alternative Setting
Program description

• Approximately 50 students K-12 in the Renton School District and surrounding school districts on contract
• A “Re-EDucation” school
• Student population is
  • 100% special education
  • 80-90% free and reduced lunch
  • Appx 85% male
• Demographics
  • 32% African American
  • 24% White
  • 22% Multi-racial
  • 18% Hispanic
Historical Perspective

- Renton Academy opened in 2006 and based on Re-EDucation framework of Nicolas Hobbes
- Ongoing cycles of evaluation and editing of discipline and academic intervention system (MTSS)
- AM/PM goals groups have been consistent throughout
- Began formal training in Restorative Practices in 2015-2016 school year
  - Many restorative practices were aligned to Re-EDucation framework and established practices.
What do Restorative Practices look like at Renton Academy?

- General milieu
- AM/PM Groups (circles)
- ROCKS talks (Respect, Ownership, Collaboration, Kindness, Safe)
  - What happened?
  - What were you thinking/feeling?
  - Who did you impact?
  - What do you need to do to make it right?
    - **NOT** – You need to apologize
    - Make a plan to do so.

- Harm Circles
AM/PM Circles

Morning Circle
- Check in
  - How are you doing?
  - Big Joy scale?
- Question of the day
  - Would you rather . . .
- Commit to goal
- T/C Business

Afternoon Circle
- How did you do?
- Peer and T/C feedback
- T/C Business
- Positives
Harm Circles: To avoid entirely or reduce exclusionary discipline

- Students, Staff and Families (as appropriate/available) meet with a facilitator who was not involved in the incident.
- Every student gets a T/C ally and is presented with the questions ahead of time. (Expressive and Receptive language deficits are common)
Restorative Ally

• If the student is in out of school suspension the ally will reach out to the student to prepare them for the circle.
  • What happened?
  • What were you thinking at the time?
  • What have you thought about since?
  • What do you need to do to make things right? What can you commit to in order to support this person going forward?
I-Ready Data – Reading

- 48.72% students who showed growth
- 15.38% students who did not show growth
- 35.90% students without sufficient data
I-Ready Data – Math

- 47.50% students who showed growth
- 35.00% students who did not show growth
- 17.50% students without sufficient data
Final thoughts

- Restorative Practices are not an “instant fix”
  - Re-EDucation states “Time is an Ally”
- Restorative Practices are not just harm circles, they permeate all aspects of the day
- Relationship is a cornerstone
Students with greatest I-Ready reading growth

- MS Student A – 478% of expected
- MS Student B – 468% of expected
- MS Student C – 350% of expected
- MS Student D – 311% of expected
- MS Student E – 284% of expected
- HS Student A – 57 points increase
- EL Student A – 225% of expected
- MS Student F – 156% of expected
- HS Student B – 23 points increase
- EL Student B – 150% of expected

RA students K-8 averaged 156% growth
Students with greatest I-Ready Math growth

- MS Student A – 367% of expected
- EL Student A – 267% of expected
- EL Student B – 283% of expected
- MS Student B – 213% of expected
- HS Student A – 28 point increase
- HS Student B – 27 point increase
- EL Student C – 163% of expected
- EL Student D – 148% of expected
- MS Student C – 133% of expected
- EL Student F – 122% of expected

RA students K-8 averaged 135% growth
Questions?

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